

Wellesley Board of Health
CONFERENCE CALL
Meeting Minutes
August 19, 2020
11:30 AM

Present:

Board:

Shepard Cohen, MPA, Chair
Marcia Testa Simonson, MPH, PhD, Vice Chair
Linda Oliver Grape, PA-C, MPH, Secretary

Staff:

Deadra Doku-Gardner, Administrator
Leonard Izzo, Director
Cheryl Lefman, Community Health Coordinator
Ann Marie McCauley, Public Health Nurse Supervisor
Vivian Zeng, Environmental Health Specialist

In attendance:

Beth Sullivan Woods, Board of Selectmen

The meeting was called to order at 11:32 am.

Citizen Speak

No one was in attendance that wished to participate in Citizens Speak.

1. Administration

- a) Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) – School Reopening- Matrix and Dashboard report

Leonard Izzo and Marcia Testa Simonson reported that the school group met yesterday to further review metrics.

Dr. Testa Simonson reviewed on the work done thus far on the dashboard plan for the Wellesley Public Schools (WPS). A student risk base assessment and employee risk base assessment have been drafted and are near completion. The group has decided on the details that would be included in the dashboard.

b) Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) – School Reopening

Marcia Testa Simonson reported on a Department of Public Health conference call. She said that teacher unions across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts have a large request before they come back to school. There is a chance that the unions will decide that teachers will not return to the classroom. A large percentage of teachers are young parents with children in daycare and in the school systems. As parents, they are concerned about their children's daycare and management of their daily lives. Dr. Testa Simonson reported that it does not appear they are concerned about their students' welfare and health as much as their own personal lives and day to day management of how they will manage classes and their own children's schedule. It is also more convenient to teach from home. Dr. Testa Simonson said these fears have become rampant. Linda Oliver Grape reported that many plans and metrics can be created, however they are not going to ease teachers' fears.

Marcia Testa Simonson reported there have been no deaths from COVID-19 of individuals under the age of 20. Wellesley is a lower risk community. Many of the teachers and school staff come from higher risk communities.

c) Daily Briefing

Cheryl Lefman reported that the briefing will be released today (by the Town Communication Manager). She reported on various social media outlets where messages and information are disseminated.

Linda Oliver Grape reported that in a past briefing, some of the facts were incorrect and requested that information be checked for accuracy in future briefings. She recommended including information on the upcoming flu season; highlighting the best time to get a flu shot is in September and October (it is too early to get a vaccine now).

d) Human Resources

Leonard Izzo reported on his recent conversation with HR director Scott Szczebak. After discussion, the two directors agreed on salaries for the Social Worker and Senior Environmental Health Agent.

Mr. Izzo and Linda Oliver Grape will be attending the HR Board (virtual) meeting this evening. Several staff members will be receiving performance awards.

Mr. Izzo reported that he will be addressing the need for additional nursing staff.

2. Community Health

a) Nursing report

Ann Marie McCauley reported there have been no new cases in Wellesley since Monday.

b) Flu

Marcia Testa Simonson reported on her meeting this morning with Ron O'Connor and MDPH. Governor Baker's office will mandate that all children will receive influenza immunization this year. The State will be providing funding for influenza vaccine for ages 18 and under.

c) Newton Wellesley Hospital and testing

Shepard Cohen reported he is confident that NWH will be offering testing for kids and will consider how the program will work for its local communities (Newton, Wellesley, Natick, Weston, etc.). Turn around testing results are expected to be within 24 hours.

Marica Testa Simonson reported that this was a topic at her meetings yesterday. Linda Chow said that Newton had signed an agreement that Newton would get priority testing. Leonard Izzo has a meeting scheduled with the Newton health director today to discuss these efforts.

Shepard Cohen reported that Los Angeles school systems will be testing every child and New York will be testing all the teachers.

Shepard Cohen reviewed an email noting that the Broad Institute is eager to continue examining the pilot program. Beth Sullivan Woods reported that it was discussed at various parent forums last night.

d) Private Colleges and Schools - reopening plans and updates

Ann Marie McCauley reported that she has reviewed all the school reopening plans.

Ms. McCauley reported that Dana Hall will not be doing any testing. The school will be doing both hybrid and remote learning. No boarders will be returning to campus.

Ms. McCauley reported Ten Acre School is still working on their opening plans and whether they will do any testing of students or faculty/staff.

Leonard Izzo reported that Mass Bay Community College is opening with only 35 students on campus.

Linda Oliver Grape reported that Wellesley College students from surge states are now residing at the Verve Hotel in Natick, MA.

3. Environmental Health

a) School Sanitation

Vivian Zeng reported on the school sanitation committee meetings that she has been attending.

At the last meeting, Shepard Cohen reiterated that the school ventilation systems need to be reviewed.

b) Boston Sports Club

Vivian Zeng reported that the club has contacted her and is interested in opening the pool. Additional information will be provided as it becomes available.

c) Outdoor Dining Park Grant

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that a meeting is taking place to discuss a grant for outdoor dining. The park is located in the area across from Green's Hardware. Leonard Izzo will be attending this meeting.

d) Council on Aging (COA)

Beth Sullivan Woods reported that the COA is planning to open the gym for use (sign-up required). Vivian Zeng reported she has reviewed the plan and they are doing a great job allowing one person at a time.

The next conference call of the Board of Health will be announced.

The Board of Health meeting adjourned at 1 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Deadra Doku Gardner
Administrator

Documents reviewed during this meeting and on-file in the Health Department:

- NONE